

**Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy
Charlottesville, Virginia
Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness
Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
November 3, 2005**

Call to Order:	The meeting was called to order by Chris Harrison, Chair, at 10:04 a.m.
Welcome and Introductions:	Mr. Harrison welcomed members and asked members and guests to introduce themselves.
Members Present:	Lisa DuVal, Scott DuVal, Vicky Fisher, Chris Harrison, Irene Rebholz, Lisa Ritchie, Mark Stevens, Byron Stith
Members Absent:	Mark Lester, Ward Marstiller
Staff Present:	Paul Buckley, Sherry Confer, Lisa Shehi
Guests Present:	Jacqueline Brown, Debbie Pugh (Mental Health Association of Virginia)
Public Comment/ Announcements:	No public comment was offered. Ms. Confer asked Council members and guests to speak loudly and clearly to accommodate for the room acoustics.
Approval of August 11, 2005 Minutes:	Mr. Harrison requested that the Council members review the minutes from the August meeting. There being no changes noted, Irene Rebholz made a MOTION to adopt the minutes as presented. Lisa Ritchie seconded the MOTION and the minutes were approved by unanimous vote of the Council.
Board of Directors Update:	<p>On behalf of Maureen Hollowell, Board Chair, Sherry Confer noted that the VOPA Board met on September 20, 2005. In order to assure adequate time for the Board to assess the 2005-2006 Objectives, there was no legal rights training. Ms. Confer further noted that, in addition to the work on the Objectives, the Board discussed the committee structure, Ombudsman program, and, through the executive committee, had deferred development of a strategic plan. Ms. Confer highlighted the following actions taken by VOPA staff over the past twelve months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 33 individual investigations• opened and worked 174 cases• worked 3 major investigations• worked 5 major litigations• successful in systems change in 19 specific areas• monitored 68 locations• developed or reissued 17 publications and distributed them to almost 3,000 individuals• provided training through office hours and rights clinics <p>Ms. Confer informed the Council that the statute that created VOPA in the Code of Virginia contains a component that provides for the development of an Ombudsman program. To date, the General Assembly has not funded that program. VOPA has submitted a funding request to be included in the Governor's budget in the amount of \$133,000 to develop a pilot Ombudsman program. Though a special committee, the Board has recommended that this pilot project focus on early intervention.</p>

**Executive Director's
Update:**

Paul Buckley, staff attorney at VOPA, presented the Executive Director's update. Mr. Buckley referred Council members to the Litigation Report and noted that there are three cases in litigation under the PAIMI Program: VOPA vs. Brice's Villa, in which VOPA continues facility monitoring. In two litigation cases regarding Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity (NGRI), one concluded in an individual being released from jail with no conditions and the second individual was released with conditions. Mr. Buckley explained that "conditional release" is similar to probation and identifies terms the individual must respond to which may include testing for substance abuse or, meeting with community service board (CSB) staff.

Mr. Buckley shared information regarding the Interagency Civil Admissions Advisory Council. The Council was created to study issues related to the provisions of Virginia law regarding the emergency custody, temporary detention, admission, and involuntary inpatient and outpatient treatment of persons with mental illness. The Council has been mandated by the General Assembly to assure the temporary detention order process in Virginia works. Further, the Council is mandated to include in its membership representation by a mental health consumer. Ms. Confer noted that this Council's meetings are open to public comment and reminded members that public comment may be made by letter as well as in person. Ms. Confer further noted that the Council could send a letter of public comment but that letter would need to be approved by the Board. Lisa Ritchie made a MOTION to discuss having the PAIMI Advisory Council draft a letter addressing concerns of the needs of mental health consumers to the Interagency Civil Admissions Advisory Council. Scott DuVal seconded the MOTION. Mr. DuVal asked that the letter address specific issues regarding medical testing against the consumer's will. Mr. Harrison discussed the possibility of having the Interagency Civil Admissions Advisory Council requested, through the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, to distribute copies of their meeting minutes to the VOPA PAIMI Council each time they are made available to the public. Mr. Buckley noted that training by Dr. Thomas Hafemeister is scheduled for the first Friday in December to be held at the Koger Center in Chesterfield County. The training will be opened to the public. Mr. Buckley expressed a desire to have a representative from VOPA attend this training. Ms. Confer asked if the Council would empower Mr. Buckley sharing with Dr. Hafemeister that the PAIMI Advisory Council has expressed concerns regarding civil commitment as it pertains to consent, restraint, and balancing client rights. The consensus of the Council was for Mr. Buckley to address this. Mr. Buckley asked Council members to communicate directly with Dr. Hafemeister as well to express their individual concerns.

The Council voted unanimously to support the development of a public comment letter which will be forwarded to the Council for review and then to the Board for approval.

Ms. Confer presented the Financial Reports and noted that VOPA is within expectations and budget regarding the PAIMI grant funds. Ms. Confer shared that two VOPA staff (Becky Currin and Mary Aab) will be training in Louisiana on disaster responsiveness to individuals with disabilities. Carryover monies from PAIMI funding will be used in part to provide financial support for this training. Ms. Ritchie noted that there is a great need for shelter and disaster training and planning especially as it relates to service animals. Ms. Confer noted that the Commonwealth of Virginia will be hosting a week-long training session to coordinate interagency planning for targeted populations and that VOPA will be represented at the training.

Membership:

Ms. Confer distributed an updated advisory council application which will serve for both the PAIMI and Disability Advisories Council. Ms. Confer also distributed a draft membership profile which identifies Council members by demographics, asking Council members to make any corrections to identifying factors by way of completing the second page of the Application. Council members and Debbie Pugh requested that Ms. Confer e-mail the application to them for distribution to peers.

Council members discussed other identifiers including “caregiver” including grandparents and “significant other” in addition to spouse. Ms. Confer explained that the factors on the application have been specifically identified by statute and bylaws.

Byron Stith inquired regarding the Hispanic Outreach Committee. Ms. Confer shared that VOPA has done radio spots but that the outreach is progressing slowly. The Council discussed barriers to individuals in the Hispanic community including cultural barriers and the fear of deportation for illegal immigrants.

Mr. Harrison reminded Council members that nominations for the offices of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary had been made at the August meeting. There being no further nominations from the floor, Lisa Ritchie made a MOTION to approve the nominations of Chris Harrison as Chair, Irene Rebholz as Vice Chair, and Scott DuVal as Secretary for the next year. Mark Stevens seconded the MOTION and it was approved by unanimous vote.

Other Business:

Ms. Confer reminded Council members that dates for the 2006 meetings were set at the August meeting. She noted that the Disabilities Advisory Council would be interested in entertaining a joint meeting of the Councils to include leadership training. The consensus of the PAIMI Council was for Ms. Confer to proceed with planning a joint meeting with a further recommendation to schedule this meeting with the April 2006 Board meeting if possible. Mr. Harrison reminded Council members that the August 17, 2006 meeting location remains undetermined. Council members suggested multiple locations throughout the state. Ms. Confer suggested postponing this decision until after she is able to investigate options and budget constraints for the meeting.

Working Lunch:

Irene Rebholz made a MOTION to adjourn to a working lunch at 11:48 a.m. Scott DuVal seconded the MOTION and it was approved by unanimous Council vote. During the lunch, Debbie Pugh discussed the ROSI (Recovery-Oriented System Indicators) Survey. The survey is a tool allowing consumers to express their anonymous reaction to mental health services in the Commonwealth.

PAIMI Annual Report:

Prior to the meeting, Ms. Confer provided Council members with a draft Annual Report to be submitted to the Board. Ms. Confer requested comments from Council members on each of the Goals identified by VOPA during the 2005 fiscal year. Ms. Confer will incorporate these comments into the report and provide to the Council members for review. Upon review by the Council, Mr. Harrison will present the Report to the Board.

**Other Business –
Meeting Dates:**

Byron Stith shared flyers with Council members noting that Virginia Organization of Consumers Asserting Leadership (VOCAL) will host workshops throughout the state.

Mr. Harrison reminded members that the next scheduled meeting of the Council is February 16 in Richmond.

Executive Session: Lisa Ritchie made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting into a closed session for the purpose of conducting business pertaining to appointment recommendation. This meeting is specifically authorized to be conducted in closed session pursuant to section 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia. Lisa DuVal seconded the MOTION and it carried unanimously.

After discussion in closed session, Byron Stith made a MOTION to certify that only such public business as that identified in the MOTION to close the meeting was heard or considered. Mark Stevens seconded the MOTION and a unanimous affirmative vote was noted.

Vicky Fisher made the MOTION to recommend the application of Jacqueline Brown as Council member. Scott DuVal seconded the MOTION and it carried by unanimous vote.

There being no further business, Byron Stith made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting. Mark Stevens seconded the MOTION and it passed by unanimous vote. The next meeting of the PAIMI Advisory Council will be February 16, 2006.

FINAL MINUTES:

_____ February 17, 2006